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**Connecticut Common School Journal,**  
AND  
**ANNALS OF EDUCATION.**

**EDITED BY RESIDENT EDITOR.**

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**WHAT CAN I DO?**

It was a remark of Daniel Webster, that "every man owes a debt to his profession." We regard the sentiment as strictly true,—and no man has a right to attach himself to any profession, unless he is in sympathy with it and possesses a real desire to do what he can for its true elevation. A profession is just what its individual members make it. Every well-qualified member, who labors with prudent zeal for his own improvement and elevation, will do something for the general advancement of the whole profession,—while every poorly qualified and inefficient member will hang as a sort of "dead weight" upon the whole,—or prove a positive negative influence.

We have often thought how much more good might be accomplished by the Teachers' profession if all its members were properly qualified for their duties and labored with an earnest and constant desire to promote the true interests of their chosen calling. Such, however, we are sorry to say, is not the case.

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But, asks the young teacher, "What can I do to be useful to my profession?" We will briefly allude to two or three points, in a familiar way.

1. Encourage and aid all proper efforts to awaken an interest in the work before you, and to promote a professional feeling on the part of those associated with you.

Educational meetings have done, and are doing, much good. They tend to bring teachers together, to increase their zeal, add to their information, and awaken a true professional spirit and interest. We believe that no man, excepting the captious bigot, can attend an educational meeting without deriving benefit from it,—even though the exercises may not possess much of positive information for him. If he attends with the right spirit he will be strengthened, quickened, and encouraged. We recently heard of a teacher of many years' experience, who boasted that he had never attended an educational meeting. The same spirit would lead him to boast that he had never attended any meeting,—civil, religious, or political,—and of never having done any thing to promote right feeling and action in any of the movements for the public good. We must confess that we have more of contempt than of pity for a man who will exult in that he has never attended a meeting for the advancement of the interests of his profession. He must certainly possess more of conceit than wisdom. If he really felt that he "knew all things," and needed no light from others, a common amount of benevolence would lead him to do what he could to impart of his own light and wisdom for the benefit of others, who are less fortunate. We have noticed that teachers, who keep aloof from all public movements for promoting educational interests, become secluded in their habits, dogmatic in their views, and unsocial and uncongenial in their disposition,—and especially where the feeling is such as to prompt them to oppose and decry all efforts of others.

We believe most fully in associated effort and action, and that no profession or cause can be properly efficient and useful without such effort,—and we would say to every young teacher, "Do what you can to aid in sustaining all associa-

tions designed for educational advancement. Give them your support in every proper way, and you will receive a benefit that will prove amply satisfactory."

Again, we would say to all teachers,—“Do what you can to aid in sustaining and improving the educational periodicals of the day, and especially of your own State. If your own State Journal is not what it ought to be, give it the benefit of your own talents and make it better. Subscribe for it and read it with candor, and we believe you will feel that you get your “money’s worth.” There are some fifteen different State Educational Journals published, and not one of them that is not worth the full price of subscription to any teacher of the right spirit; and, we may add, there is not one of them that might not be greatly improved if all teachers would co-operate in their support. But it is to be lamented that all these Journals have to struggle for existence. There are many in the teachers’ ranks who do nothing for their support,—and there are even some who, with the disposition of the “dog in the manger,” feel annoyed and troubled lest others get some benefit from them. If they are asked to help support the Journal, they will decline and say “it is not what they want,”—or, some even go so far as to say, they will not subscribe simply because they have been asked to do so! They are so full of self-conceit, that they feel in a degree insulted if any one presumes to ask their aid and support. But we rejoice that the number of such in this State is very small. We would say in brief, if it is desirable to have educational journals, it is important that every teacher should bear his part in their support, and do his part in writing for their pages. Be earnest and be true to your profession, ever ready to do what you can to aid in its elevation, and thus increase its power and influence. While you may justly seek your own improvement, do not forget to do what you can to give light and encouragement to others whose advantages have been less than yours, and when you come to feel so wise that you can learn no more, or so selfish that you can not impart of your wisdom and experience for the common good of the profession, it will be quite time for you to go into some other field of labor.

For the Common School Journal.

## MISCHIEF IN SCHOOL.

PROBABLY nothing gives the teacher so much trouble as the love of mischief. This crops out every where, and in children of all ages. The teacher calls it mischief, but the pupil calls it fun. There is nothing which seems to the child so strange, or so repulsive even, as the teacher's sobriety. "We can't have a bit of fun where he is," is often the language of the boy or girl. "I never saw children so full of mischief," is often the language of the teacher. The difference in the name gives insight into the real difference between the same action as viewed by the two parties. *Fun* the pupil means it for generally. He does some sly thing which is improper, but not itself wrong otherwise than it is improper, and shields himself under the excuse that he did it for fun. He meant no harm by it; he did not mean to annoy the teacher, or to disturb the school. He did it because he must be doing something; and to pinch his neighbor or make his seat-mate laugh was a more interesting way of spending his time than to study his spelling-lesson. He is full of overflowing of bodily activities. His fingers itch to take hold of forbidden things; his tongue aches to whisper some mirth-moving secret; his very eyes hanker after sights he ought not to see;—and this, not with any reference at all, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, to the teacher or to the rules and proprieties of the place. And herein consists the wrong. He ought to remember what has been told him, and though he can not see the harm of doing as he likes, he ought to do strictly what the teacher has told him to do, and to leave undone what the teacher has forbidden. But he craves fun, and this craving seeks the nearest objects of gratification, and leads him into constant temptations, and often brings him to most unexpected grief.

The teacher, annoyed by the many repetitions of a similar offense, is in danger of looking at the actions of the child as prompted by malice, and so calls them mischievous. They are no fun to him, but are meant to be annoyances as bold

as personal safety will allow. Hence these peccadillos are all seen and all treated alike. The temper has become soured, and the vision is blurred to such a degree that all children's actions are necessarily mischievous.

No proper allowance is made for the play impulses; indeed, mere play is to many a thing forgotten, left far behind in the dim distance of childhood. The temptations which assail children seem no temptations at all. And yet, strange to say, many teachers can lay aside all their sternness of manner and rigidity of principles when they are out of school, and be guilty of offenses against propriety for which they would accept no excuse but the rod from their own pupils. The strictest haters and the most severe correctors of play are sometimes themselves the most playful or the most mischievous of persons.

There must be a difference obviously in the treatment of fun and of mischief. To crush out the former would be a folly and a crime; to allow the latter would be to invite evil spirits into school and give them free range. Fun may be checked, may be sobered gradually; the spontaneous activity in which it has its origin may be directed to school duties so that the lessons of school may furnish a part at least of the zest of life; it may be indulged sometimes, allowed to vent itself in some harmless way,—may be joined in by the teacher, to his relief as well as the pupil's.

But mischief, pure, ascertained mischief, merits stern treatment. Reproof, rebuke, and as a last resort, the *rod*, must correct it. This must be promptly met and crushed at all hazards. But we should beware of confounding the two. Our knowledge of human nature and our discernment of the motives of others should be accurate enough to reveal to us the true motive of an offense,—whether it is simply an overflow of animal impulse, or a deliberate plotting against the plan and order of a school. Correction ought to be gauged by the seriousness of the offense, and to punish all apparently similar actions in the same way is to do a great injustice. "I did not mean to do it," is an honest plea many times, and ought to be a strong recommendation to mercy.

May 7th, 1863.

For the Common School Journal.

## THE STUDY OF THE ENGLISH CLASSICS.

THE teacher requires not only a well-disciplined mind, but a vast fund of information from which he can draw at all times for the purpose of illustrating whatever he may be teaching. This requires that the teacher should be constantly improving himself, if he would have his labors crowned with the noblest success. English literature offers a rich field for study and improvement, and some of the best models in the language are within the teacher's means. In our language may be found productions of rare merit in history, in poetry, in criticism, in the art of teaching,—indeed in all departments of knowledge, and teachers will find an acquaintance with them of much value in their profession. By a critical perusal of such works the mind comes in contact with other minds, opinions are modified, new ideas received, thought developed, the taste cultivated, and the imagination disciplined. The mind can thus be kept active, expedients will be originated, and a tendency to a monotonous round of school duties prevented. This will be particularly the case in the departments of reading, grammar, history, and, to some extent, geography.

The teacher who is thoroughly versed in literature will have an important advantage in teaching reading. From the force of habit, he will more readily perceive the thought embodied in the lesson, will more readily apprehend the force and meaning of the words employed, and will more keenly feel the power of those passages where the various emotions of the heart are described. Hence he will be more successful in his attempts to make the lesson understood, will have more skill in explaining the use of words, and will give his illustrations in reading with more power and effect. Under such a teacher, the reading-lesson would assume a new aspect. His culture would be the magician's wand that would transform the whole scene into a living, glowing picture of joy and enthusiasm. The child, while he will be learning to read with accuracy and order, will be storing his mind with

a variety of useful knowledge, and will be acquiring a love for good literature that will be of incalculable benefit through all subsequent years of existence. Such scenes have been realized, and there is room for still further improvement. The dull round of reading that is to be seen in so many of our schools, may be effectually broken up by proper culture and effort on the part of the teacher. But we must all remember that *self-improvement* is the foundation upon which the superstructure must be reared.

The advantage of an acquaintance with the classical literature of our language will be very apparent in teaching grammar, particularly in the more advanced classes. It is of little use to learn the rules of grammar, and to be able to tell the different parts of speech and their relations to each other, unless the child acquires the habit of using language properly. The ability to use words accurately is one of the most striking characteristics of a scholar. The teacher should be a model in this respect. Where can he find better models for his own improvement than the English classics? In many of our public schools classes may be found who are sufficiently advanced to study with profit some work like the "Seasons," or the "Task," if they can be guided by a competent teacher. Such works should be studied with critical care for the purpose of pointing out the style, tracing the learned allusions, perceiving the naturalness, the beauty or sublimity of the descriptions, developing the taste, entering into their spirit, and awakening a permanent love of good literature. Much might be done in this way toward developing a correct taste in the minds of many who will have no other advantages than the public school. Teachers, might we not profitably spend more time in studying the English classics? The poet truly says:

"Seek to gain

Complete symmetrical development,  
That thou may'st minister in things of use  
To all who seek the palace of thy mind."

A TEACHER.

CANTERBURY, May 2, 1863.

For the Common School Journal.

## TO COUNTRY DISTRICT TEACHERS.

## READING.

THIS important branch is very imperfectly taught in many of our common school. Teachers tell their pupils to read slowly and distinctly, without, in many cases, endeavoring to do so themselves. In order to make good readers, the teacher should take his turn as often as the scholars, if there are but four or five in the class. No mistake, however slight, should escape correction. If the teacher fails to notice any error, the scholars should have the privilege of raising their hands and calling his attention to the fact, and if the teacher also makes occasionally (knowingly, of course,) a few trifling blunders for their correction, they will be induced to look on their books during the whole time occupied by the class. If two or more scholars are allowed in each class, every day, to read a short, suitable story, it will awaken an interest, and cause them to put forth efforts which will be crowned with success. Small scholars should always be questioned in relation to what they read, and if they read the same lesson three days in succession it will do them no harm. Classes that can read well should practice reading in concert, and the teacher should ask many questions in relation to the punctuation marks, inflections, emphasis, and capital letters, in the reading exercise.

T. L., A COUNTRY TEACHER.

## FEMALE TEACHERS.

THE practice of employing female teachers for consecutive terms is yearly gaining ground in our rural districts, and we rejoice that it is so. In a majority of the districts of the State, it would be far better to employ lady teachers, term after term, than to have the frequent changes now so common. We believe that our best female teachers are fully competent to instruct and govern a large proportion of the schools of the State, and we see no good reason why they

should not be employed and liberally compensated for their services. These schools do not offer sufficient inducement for male teachers, as permanent situations,—and therefore we would urge upon such districts to give more of permanence to their schools by employing female teachers for consecutive terms. We fully concur in the following views contained in a late report of Rev. B. G. Northrop, Agent of the Mass. Board of Education,—a gentleman well known to many of our readers.

“The leading objection to the policy of employing permanent female teachers in our common district schools, is founded on the supposition that delicate and timid women will not succeed so well in the government of schools in which rough and refractory boys are gathered together. This is a very common and plausible objection, and is worthy of respectful consideration. It was formerly supposed that physical strength was the prime characteristic of a good disciplinarian, and that brute force was the chief agency in school government. The objection under consideration bears a near affinity to this antiquated notion. During the present winter a competent teacher was rejected, on examination in one of our towns, because the committee judged, from his smallness of stature, that “he would not be able to whip the larger boys.” A tall and stalwart man was therefore secured, who, relying on his physical strength, and seeking only to govern, failed at once in every thing else, and after two short weeks even in that, and gave up in despair. Horace Mann well said: ‘A man may keep a difficult school by means of authority and physical force; a woman can do it only by dignity of character, affection, such a superiority in attainment as is too conspicuous to be questioned.’

“A silent moral power ought to reign in the school-room rather than ostentatious and *merely* coercive measures. Its influence is more happy, effective, and permanent. Corporal punishment may be used as a dernier resort in extreme cases. But true wisdom and skill in school government consists in the prevention rather than in the punishment of offenses,—in cultivating the better feelings of our nature, truthfulness, generosity, kindness and self-respect, love of study and a sense of duty. Such influences women are pre-eminently fitted to wield. Refined and lady-like manners, with a mellow and winning voice, will exert a peculiar sway, even upon the rudest and most unmannerly youth. A striking illustration of this influence over the most turbulent elements I wit-

nessed in one of our State Reformatory institutions, a few weeks since. A division of these rough boys, unmanageable in the hands of their former teacher, and often needing the sternest discipline, under a new teacher of great skill, patience, and genuine kindness, was soon won to obedience and attracted to order and studiousness; interest was awakened, ambition excited, and hearts all unused to love, and still more, to be loved, were strangely inspired with respect and affection for their teacher. Even upon these rough boys there was a silent power in the very face of their teacher, beaming with love for them and enthusiasm in her truly noble work.

"Females seem to be better adapted by nature to teaching little children. Male teachers seldom leave their impress clearly marked upon young pupils. They lack the requisite gentleness, the patience and perseverance in little things, the quick discernment of character, the instinctive power to inspire the youthful spirit and arouse its latent powers. Above all, they are destitute of those delicate arts which are so requisite to win the affections of children, to call forth and direct their earliest aspirations, and to impart the needful impulse to their minds. Cheerfulness and enthusiasm, courtesy and kindness, and the power of easy, quiet, unconscious influence, are requisites indispensable to the attractiveness, order and efficiency of the school. Females are endowed with a more bountiful share of these desirable qualities.

"Facts on this point may be more satisfactory than arguments. In a certain school which I visited under both administrations, the last male teacher utterly failed in the maintenance of order, although *highly* favored with the old essentials of a good disciplinarian, "tall and stout," and although he used the rod with merciless freedom and severity, his authority was nevertheless openly resisted. A female teacher has since, without difficulty, governed the same school, numbering over fifty pupils, of whom fourteen were over fifteen years of age, five over seventeen, and one over twenty. Her government was easy and persuasive, yet dignified and firm. Her intelligence, skill, tact and kindness made the school a model of good order. A single case, I am well aware, proves little, but the instance I have related is only a fair illustration of a multitude that have come under my observation. Great care of course must be taken in the selection of teachers. Unless they are competent, the experiment will be likely to fail."

## THE TRUE WOMAN.

If the business of woman were to acquire the golden ore, I might think wealth the most important possession of a lady. It is not; she has a higher and holier object for which to strive. When Beau Brummel was asked what makes a gentleman, he quickly answered, "Starch, starch, my lord." However that may be, somewhat more is required of a lady. As the most exquisite tones of music are drawn from those plain old violins made at Cremona, so the highest traits of womanhood are often found with the plainest exterior. It is not requisite that she should cover her delicate cheeks with rouge, affect the Grecian bend, or play the languishing lady. Oh, no; the mission of woman is most high—most sacred. Her sway, when she is what she ought to be, though mild and gentle, is more potent than an armed host rushing to battle. She makes her self-styled master seek her favor. In the progress of humanity she is that orient star that shines on those who tread the path of duty. Loveliness is around her,—her steps are like songs. A Grecian philosopher observed, two thousand years ago, "Boys should learn what will be of use to them, being men." Girls seem to be taught on the principle of learning what will *not* be of use to them when grown up. Mrs. Brown can dance and *parlez vous francais*, but can she dance a dinner on the table? Can she direct skillfully the affairs of her household? Can she save the fragments? Can she make good bread? I repeat it, *can she make good bread?* Does she understand the philosophy of the rag-bag? Can she charm her husband by her skill, loveliness, frugality? Then shall I call her a lady. She looks well to the ways of her household.

Miss Rosabella is destined for a clergyman's wife, as soon as he obtains a settlement. She goes to the merchant for her furniture, understands dancing, playing the piano, keeps an album, has a photograph book, but no useful accomplishment. A man had better marry a canary bird than such a woman. I had rather have her able to work out a good loaf of bread than the hardest problem in Greenleaf's Algebra,

to square the outgoes with the income, than to square the circle.

Enter yonder lowly room with me in that poverty-stricken cottage. See the window stuffed with straw, the form of a man upon the humble bed, the wasted face, the translucent fingers, the tears stealing from his cheek, his anguish as he thinks of the little ones around his bedside who will soon be fatherless. Who will cheer him? Who tell him,

"Jesus can make a dying bed,  
Soft as downy pillows are?"

Who assure him that his darlings shall be provided for? Who lift them to kiss his cheek when life is passing away?

"Oh, woman, in our hours of ease,  
Uncertain, coy, and hard to please;  
And fickle as the shade  
By the light, quivering aspen made;  
When want or anguish wrings the brow  
A ministering angel then art thou.

Man beside the sick bed is feeble as an infant; woman, in her weakness, is all-powerful there. She seeks the abode of penury and want. As the perfume is essential to a perfect rose, so is this quality of mercy essential to woman. "In her tongue is the law of kindness." The more she knows of science, literature, art, and the like, the more powerful is her influence, provided she use her knowledge modestly. She should study grammar to write correctly, physiology to preserve her health, Italian to read Silvio Pellico, and so on. I care not how much of the *blue* she wears in her stocking, provided she *knits* it also. It is the mother's prerogative to point her little one to God's smile in every opening flower, to hear His music in every dashing of the wave upon the seashore. The memory of a mother's smile, her gentle words, her admonitions and acts of affection, are remembered to the very last. The blood-stained veteran of Waterloo could think of his mother in the dying hour. "My dear sir," said Governor Briggs to John Quincy Adams, "I have just found out who made you." The "old man eloquent" looked up astonished. "I have just been reading your mother's letter,

and have found *she* made you." "Yes, under God, I owe all I am to my mother." Who shall tell the difference between the gentle Lamartine, brought up by a loving mother to cling to every thing lovely, and the misanthropic Byron, scoffing at God and man. The mothers shape the children. The mother is to lead the van more than the minister; she is to move the moral enginery and to hold the golden key which opens up the eternal world. What wisdom, what angelic virtue, what discretion and love, are, or should be, hers. "Her children rise up," says my authority, "rise up, and call her blessed; her husband, also, he praiseth her." She must wear the rose of Sharon upon her breast, she must be the almoner of bounty to the poor, the dispenser of good always.

"A woman that feareth God, she is praised." She sings the psalm of life, breathing low, sweet notes. The perfect lady is made not by rank and title, not by arts which beautify the person, but by the Bible. The more she sends forth that angel-music which cheers like melody from the skies, the more truly is she a perfect lady. Teachers, make your children perfect American ladies. It is a problem which might make the fingers of an angel tremble.

Keep ever in mind you have a magnificent problem to work out; have faith that you can solve it. Read the lovely Fenelon; profit by his teaching. Forget not to read the noble works of Dr. Arnold, head-master of the boys' school at Rugby, England. Read of one nobler still, Jesus Christ; follow his example.

You must qualify yourselves for all the duties of life. Consider what you have to do. Keep ever in mind the object to be attained. Be sure to teach perfect obedience to your will. Keep your eyes steadily fixed on the bright points in your pupils' characters; seek not the evil, bring out the good. Teach your pupils to watch the progress of the sun, stars, and other heavenly orbs; teach them the love of man, that the humblest man who walks the streets, though clad in a beggar's garb, has an immortal soul. Would you have them take an interest in music, astronomy, geography, then

love it yourself. Would you have them love God, then love Him yourself,—set the example. Fellow-teacher, fear God more than your school committee man. When your school is fairly out, your name shall be high, you shall hear the trump of eternal fame.—*Rev. E. Nason.*

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For the Common School Journal.

**"LOOK BEFORE YOU LEAP."**

THERE are few sayings which contain better advice than that which heads this article. It is applicable to all persons, and capable of doing much good if universally adopted in the common affairs of life. But the whole advantage of it can be derived by no class of persons so well as by those whose minds are growing, and whose habits of thinking and acting are being formed. Children are naturally impulsive, and, until otherwise taught, seldom look beyond an object which they fancy will yield them some present gratification. The first sight of objects is apt, with them, to create an impression, for good or for evil, which an acquaintance more or less intimate will afterwards undo. They will sometimes learn from sad experience, the danger of haste and of want of consideration in their actions, and will regulate their conduct accordingly; but if untaught in some other way, they will oftener grow up and remain through life careless and inconsiderate. When arrived at manhood, such persons will find themselves suffering from that which a little proper training in early life would have prevented.

And where can this training be so well done as in our schools? It should be a part of every teacher's duty to early and constantly instill into his pupil's mind the importance of never doing any thing with too great haste. The pupil should be taught to look forward to the probable consequences of every action before that action is taken. If it is judged that the consequences resulting from the action will be evil, the action should be avoided; on the other hand, if beneficial, it may be performed. By pursuing this course, thousands of

ill-judged acts, in almost every person's life, which occasion loss or regret when too late, would be avoided.

In order to render this course effective, children should be taught to be in the constant *habit* of deliberately considering the effect of any contemplated conduct, and secretly asking themselves the question: "Is it right, or is it wrong for me to do this?" The little delay which this would cause would give an opportunity for thought, which would lead them to act understandingly—doing that which is right, and avoiding that which would be wrong. It would soon fasten on the minds of the growing scholars the fixed habit of doing things with deliberation and caution. This habit would grow with their growth, imparting to them an important part of the knowledge on which their future success in life depends.

The same remarks will apply to the common practice of children speaking too hastily and rashly. There was never better advice given than in the adage, "Think twice before you speak once," which has the same relation to too hasty speaking, that the adage, "Look before you leap," has to too hasty acting.

The correction of this fault also becomes the duty of the teacher. The scholar should be made to know that discretion in the use of the tongue is as necessary as in the use of the hands or feet. An incautious speech may cause great regret on the part of the person who utters it; and the regret will be much increased by the reflection that what has been said can not be unsaid.

G. B.

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#### THE WIND.

Oh, the wind is a fickle, changeful thing,  
As it hasteth along on its viewless wing;  
Sometimes with a rush, a sweep, and a bound,  
As it whirls the pure snow-wreaths on the ground.  
'Tis now here, and now there,—anon 'twill sleep  
As a weary child in a slumber deep;  
Or, perchance, 'twill whisper with soft, mild breath,  
And beauty awakes from the gloom and death.

It kisses the cheek of the lovely flower,  
As it lifts its sweet face in summer hour;  
Gently it waves the tall grass on the lea,  
Then seemeth to rest 'neath the forest tree;  
It plays with the leaflets, or rocks the bough,  
Or fans with cool breath some hot, fevered brow;  
It may hush to a whisper, or breathe aloud,  
It may sweep on the earth, or waft the cloud.

Oh, did ye e'er list to the wind-harp's moan,  
As it sighed a requiem, sad and lone,  
When the sweet summer died? Its breath grew chill,  
As it bade the life-current of earth be still;  
Yet how soon it whistled, as if in glee,  
While it broke the heart of the old oak-tree;  
Or, with the sharp blast of its powerful breath,  
O'er the earth threw ruin, destruction, and death.

Oh, fearful, yea, awful, it sweeps o'er the main,  
When the proud ship battles its fury in vain;  
How weak all its efforts—now onward it flies—  
Then the sea's liquid mountains above it rise—  
'Mid the rocks now dashing—list the shriek, "Oh, save!"  
That rises above e'en the boom of the wave.  
Oh, when will it reach the bright, peaceful shore?  
The blue waves close o'er it,—winds sigh, "Never more!"

Oh, tell us, ye wild winds, from whence do ye come,  
And whither ye're going,—oh, where is your home?  
Do ye roam the wide world with no guiding hand,  
No arm to withstay you, no voice to command?  
A whisper breathed low through the forest pine;  
It answered most sweetly, "Our Maker's divine;  
We go at His bidding,—we wait His will,—  
And His voice doth calm us with 'Peace, be still!'"

F. R. WHITON.

## ELEMENTARY INSTRUCTION.

[We find the following sensible views in the late Report of Hon. David N. Camp, Superintendent of Schools. We fully endorse the views, and hope the time is not distant when young children will be managed in accordance with the suggestions so happily made.—*Res. Ed.*]

## PRIMARY SCHOOLS.

There are many excellent primary schools in the State, in which philosophical methods of instruction have been introduced, in which little children are made happy while their perceptive faculties are cultivated and the whole mind is wisely educated. In some of these schools "object teaching" has been successfully introduced, and the children have been taught to study nature as well as books. Reading has been made an interesting exercise, spelling has been better taught, and the children have been trained to right habits, while they have been taught to think. This may be illustrated by an account of two schools, visited the same day in the month of October last. In each school was a class just beginning to read, about twenty children of nearly the same age and capabilities in each class.

In one room the teacher was endeavoring to teach a class from the book by pointing to a letter and naming it, or perhaps spelling out a word and then requiring the child to do the same,—and while one was reading most of the others in the class were gazing about the room. The children were not interested, the recitation was dull and monotonous, the teacher was tired and discouraged, and she remarked, "I have been proceeding in this way with these children for six months, and I do not see that they learn anything."

In the other school, the teacher had her class arranged around her platform; the reading-lesson consisted of familiar words printed upon the blackboard or on sheets suspended on the wall. Every eye was fixed at the same time upon the same word, the questions were skillfully put and promptly answered. The exercise was full of life and interest; some

fact was stated or illustration used to fix the word in the minds of the children, and the pupils were all happy and the teacher cheerful and hopeful. Upon examination it was found that nearly the whole class had learned more in three weeks than had been attempted in the other school in six months, and what was still more worthy of notice, one class loved the school and its work, while the other appeared to regard them as intolerably irksome.

There is great necessity for an entire change in the methods of instruction and training in a large number of the primary schools and classes. There are needed methods by which all the faculties will be developed and educated, instead of loading the memory with a quantity of words. The habit of observation needs to be cultivated and directed and the activities of the child's mind to be skillfully directed, that they may ever be employed for a noble purpose.

In the last annual report from this office the subjects of primary instruction and methods of teaching were dwelt upon at considerable length. They are again referred to from the fact, that notwithstanding great improvement has been made, there are still many schools where the time and labor of the teacher are nearly lost from the want of a knowledge of method, or from a lack of proper studies and exercises for young children. The changes which seem desirable are these:

1. That the school hours for young children should be reduced so as not to exceed two or two and a half each day, including changes and recesses.

2. That in the assignment of studies and exercises two great truths should be recognized: 1st, that there is a natural order of development of the human faculties; 2d, that the attention of a young child can profitably be directed to a subject only for a few minutes at a time.

The best informed and most skillful educators are unanimous in the opinion that it is folly, or worse than folly, to require a little child to learn lessons from books by studying the words, till his powers have been so far developed that the attention can be fixed for a length of time without injury,

and the mind is in a condition to receive and digest what is given it to learn.

In England many important facts relating to the subject have been published by E. Chadwick, in pursuance of an address from the House of Lords. Mr. Chadwick directed questions to many distinguished teachers. Mr. Donaldson, head-master of the Training College of Glasgow, says, "The limits of voluntary and intelligent attention are, with children from five to seven years of age, about fifteen minutes, and from seven to ten years of age, about twenty minutes." Other statements go to show that young children should not be required to fix their attention on a book for many minutes at a time. One great mistake of teachers of young children is in attempting to teach what the children are not able to receive, and in continuing the exercises after their powers are exhausted. If the teachers of primary and intermediate schools could be induced to give their attention to the cultivation of the powers of observation and attention, and to teach the child a few things well, not overloading the memory, but exercising it wisely in retaining facts and ideas well understood, the foundation of right education would be better laid, and the work of the teacher of the higher school made easier and more productive of good.

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OFFICIAL DEPARTMENT.

OFFICE OF SUPERINTENDENT OF COMMON SCHOOLS, }  
NEW BRITAIN, May 12, 1863. }

INQUIRIES have frequently been made at this office in regard to stamp duties on the various forms and certificates used by different school officers in the performance of their duties connected with common schools.

Blank forms of all the various certificates and returns were sent to the Commissioner of Internal Revenue, some time since, and his opinion upon them is just received. He decides that the certificate of the district committee to the enumeration of scholars requires no stamp, but the affidavit to such certificate requires a five-cent stamp.

The certificate of the district committee that the schools have been legally kept, and the certificate of the school visitors to the Comptroller to the same effect, are exempt from stamp duties; as are also the returns and certificates to the Superintendent of Common Schools.

The certificates for drawing library money require no stamp. The certificate of qualification of teachers for common schools requires a five-cent stamp.

DAVID N. CAMP,  
*Superintendent of Common Schools.*

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From the Congregationalist.

#### RELATION OF EXERCISE TO HEALTH

BY WORTHINGTON HOOKER, M. D.

In the conclusion of a previous article on this subject, I alluded to the difference in the sexes in liability to deformity in the spinal column. While this occurs very seldom in boys, it is exceedingly common in girls. Dr. Warren of Boston, said on this point, "of the well-educated females within the sphere of my experience, about one-half are affected with some degree of distortion of the spine." A very judicious French writer says: "It is so common that out of twenty girls who have attained the age of fifteen years, there are not two who do not present very manifest traces of it." This deformity has been sometimes attributed to the posture which is assumed in study; but if this were the cause, it should be even more prevalent among boys than girls, as they are by custom allowed to be less careful as to posture. The true cause of the deformity is the feebleness of the tissues from lack of invigorating exercise. The tendency of nature is to symmetry, and this is maintained even in opposition to decided influences to the contrary, so long as there is vigor; but when there is feebleness, irregularity of action results, and there is therefore a tendency to deformity. The twenty-four bones of the spine, with their intervening cartilages, are held together in a symmetrical column by muscles and ligaments. Now when this column is bent to one side for some length of time, no permanent bending to that side is produced, because the firm cartilages and ligaments, by their elasticity, restore the column to its upright position, as soon as the bending power ceases to be applied.

Moreover, the muscles on both sides are so nicely balanced, when they have their natural strength, that they hold the spine exactly in the middle, when there is no attempt made to bend it to the one side or the other. But, on the other hand, when there is an enfeebled condition, the diminished elasticity of the ligaments, and the cartilages, and the irregular action of the weakened muscles, together cause a failure to some little extent, in the restoration of the symmetry, and repeated failures at length produce manifest deformity.

In estimating the influence of exercise in counteracting tendencies to disease, we should particularly note its effect upon the *skin*. This is not a mere covering for the body, but an organ performing some very important functions, and therefore it is essential to health that it should be in a vigorous and active state. One of those functions is excretion. Much of the refuse of the system is constantly passing off with the insensible perspiration. This is a very still and unobserved process, but a very important one, for if this refuse should be retained, it would tend to provoke disease of some kind. I need hardly say that the better the development of this organ, the more effectually will this function be performed. But there is another benefit to the skin from exercise, besides its due development. In the skin there is a vast system of tubes devoted to excretion. Mr. E. Wilson, with the aid of a microscope, counted 3,528 tubes in a square inch on the palm of the hand. He reckoned that in the whole skin there are about seven millions of these tubes, and that the total amount of tubing is 48,600 yards, or 28 miles. Now any one can see that brisk exercise must be of great use to this apparatus, for the sensible perspiration produced will wash out the tubes, and so prevent any obstruction from occurring in them. This occasional washing out, which is never secured by those who take only gentle exercise, is just as essential to the preservation of health as the occasional external washing of the skin is to cleanliness.

I pass now to consider the modes or kinds of exercise which may be thus classified.

1. Common exercise, as walking and riding horseback.
2. Common sports.
3. Gymnastic exercises, so called.
4. Labor.

There are many erroneous ideas prevalent in regard to the comparative value of these modes, and the subject merits a full consideration; but my limits allow me only to throw out a few hints. In order that exercise may produce its best ef-

fect, it should be accompanied with exhilaration or a genial pleasurable excitement. It is this that makes horseback riding so very beneficial as it often is, in the restoration of health. Accordingly it is of little use to the invalid who has never ridden a horse, until he learns to ride with ease and skill, which seems to be an impossibility in some cases. It is the genial exhilaration of common sports which make them generally more invigorating than mere labor. So also labor which is pursued with an interesting object, accompanied with exercise of the mental powers, and relieved by variety, has a genial, and therefore a healthy influence, while labor that is objectless, unthinking, and monotonous, as for example the labor of the treadmill, may by its depressing influence, even produce an opposite effect. I once knew a city clergyman to get his daily exercise for a time by shoveling a pile of sand back and forth in his cellar. Little exhilaration was there in this, and therefore little good came from the exercise. A wise man was that clergyman who told me that he systematically took his daily exercise by walking, having for his object the making of some brief calls on his parishioners. In this way he accomplished much of his work as a pastor, and thus secured in full a cordial and invigorating influence from his daily exercise.

Walking is the most common exercise of students, but it fails to produce the full effect needed, from its being objectless. It is so from a radical defect in the prevalent mode of education—the shutting out of the natural sciences almost wholly from all common education, and their sparing introduction into academies and colleges. It is a defect which can be removed, and I hope to live to see it done. The natural sciences should be taught *from the beginning of education, with proper gradation, just as we do with mathematics and language.* This would make every pupil a naturalist to some extent, and would take him out in the field and the forest in search of the curiosities which are scattered everywhere in rich profusion. People go to museums to see curiosities; but the world is one grand museum, and the rambling of the pupil to find its wonders, will give him a plenty of exercise that has the spice of exhilaration in it. To show the influence which such a mode of studying natural science as I have indicated has upon health, I will cite a single case. Being consulted in regard to the ill health of a young lady who was a great student, I at once said, medicine will do but little here; but there is a way in which not only health, but even vigorous health can be obtained. The

plan I proposed was this—two studies only must be pursued at one time, the patient to choose one and I the other. I chose botany, and told her that as the spring was opening, she must study her botany mostly in the open air, collecting specimens. She at once found herself improving, and following out the course faithfully, before a year had passed she had become so vigorous as to be able to walk over twenty miles in one day. Here the exhilaration connected with the exercise was derived from one study alone, but with the plan of education which I advocate, it can be derived from various studies, mineralogy, geology, zoölogy, &c. I would have not only studying, but teaching, lecturing, done in part in the open air. How grand and appropriate, and eminently useful, too, would be a lecture by Prof. Dana on geology, on the top of West Rock!

A word or two in relation to gymnastics. There is nothing peculiarly excellent in this as distinguished from other modes of exercise. It is claimed by some that it produces a more complete muscular development than ordinary exercise; but the development is certainly sufficiently complete for the purposes of health with any mode of exercise that is active in all parts of the body, as in the ordinary varieties of labor, and in common sports. There is one serious objection to an *exclusive* reliance on gymnastic exercises—it inclines to a neglect of exercise when the gymnastic appliances are not at hand. To secure habits of exercise which shall last a life-time, there must not be a dependence on any one mode, but all the modes of which I have spoken should be cultivated together. And above all things there should be no contempt cast upon labor. *Every one should have this as some portion of his exercise.* For example, every young lady should be trained in the labors of housewifery, as a necessary part of her education, and no parent knows how to manage her household skillfully and wisely, who cannot secure the free and cheerful performance of such labor from her daughters.

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[The authoress of the following lines writes thus to the associate editor in a note enclosing them: "I feel that I have hardly done justice to so beautiful a motto as the one I selected—'*Faithful To-day.*' What more can be required of any one? I wonder if there are many who are really faithful in all things—not in great deeds, but in the

little occurrences of every-day life, the government of the thoughts and disposition, improvement of the mind, imparting knowledge to others, and the many opportunities of doing good to those around us, thus making our lives a blessing to all." "Faithful To-day" is a beautiful motto for the teacher, who always finds some discouragements in his work.—ASSOCIATE EDITOR.]

## FAITHFUL TO-DAY.

Oh life! a dear and precious boon,  
 Though changing e'er, and passed so soon  
     As meteor's stay;  
 Despair and hope, sorrow and joy,  
 No happiness without alloy,  
     No cloudless day;  
 'Tis wise to keep, in all the way,  
 This motto bright—*faithful to-day.*

Linger not o'er the treasured past,  
 Nor yet into the future cast  
     Too anxious eye,  
 But, trusting it with higher power,  
 The duty of each passing hour  
     May we descry;  
 And cheerful, hopeful, e'er essay,  
 In truth, to be *faithful to-day.*

The simple deed, the smile, the tear  
 Of sympathy for suffering here,  
     Be ours to know;  
 Through sunlight or through darkness drear,  
 Though not one ray the heart may cheer,  
     Yet firm and true,  
 Through good report or evil day,  
 E'er still the same—*faithful to day.*

Oh blessed life, whose each to-day  
 With holy deeds inwrought—a ray  
     Of purest light  
 This world doth know—and when shall come  
 The welcome morrow, in that home  
     Past death's short night,  
 Near to the Infinite are they,  
 Who here have been *faithful to-day.*

F. R. W

## FOR GENERAL EXERCISE.

Teachers will find it well to spend a few minutes occasionally in calling upon their pupils to go to the black board and perform operations like the following: Draw a line 1 foot long; six inches long; three feet long; two parallel lines 18 inches long; a figure 15 inches square an oblong 8 inches by 12; a circle 10 inches in diameter.

Let the teacher hold up a book and request the pupils to mark its size upon the blackboard; do the same with a cane; a hat; etc. etc. These exercises may be extended indefinitely and will prove very useful in disciplining the judgment as regulated by the eye. After your pupils have had some training on these simple exercises,—call upon them to give their estimate of the length and width of the windows in the school room; of the doors; the length, width and height of the room; the size of the school yard; the width of the street etc. A little daily attention to these points will lead to habits of observation and comparison. Try it.

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MILITARY TERMS—CONTINUED.

**GABIONS.** Cylindrical baskets, without top or bottom, made of plant twigs, filled with earth, and placed to resist cannon-shot.

**GLACIS.** The declivity of ground running from beyond the counterscarp of the ditch to the open country, and swept by the fire of the parapet.

**GRAPE.** Large shot (usually nine) sewed together in cylindrical bags, which are made to fit like cartridges into cannon.

**GRENADE.** A small shell with a short fuse, which may be thrown into the enemy's works.

**GRENADIERS.** The infantry company on the right of the regiment is called the grenadier company, because they formerly carried hand grenades.

**GUARD.** A portion of troops regularly detailed, whose duty is to watch against surprise and disorder. The individual soldiers of the guard are called sentinels.

**GUERRILLA.**

**GUIDON.** Small silken flags borne by calvary and light artillery.

**GUNPOWDER.** A composition of saltpetre (76 parts) charcoal (14 parts,) and sulphur (10 parts.) The charcoal is the combustible part; the saltpetre furnishes the oxygen, and changes the mass into gas; the sulphur gives intensity of heat.

**HALBERD.** A kind of spear.

**HAVELOCK.** A cloth cap with large cape to protect the neck from the sun.

**HAVERSACK.** A coarse linen bag for carrying provisions on a march.

**HOLSTERS.** Cases fixed to the front of calvary saddles to hold a pair of pistols.

**HORS DU COMBAT.** (French: literally, out of combat.) Not able to take part in immediate action. The term includes all dead, wounded, missing, or those who from any cause are thus disabled.

**HOWITZER.** A piece of artillery with a chamber at the bottom of the bore, in which the cartridge is placed; intended for firing shells.

**INFANTRY.** Foot troops, divided into infantry of the line and light infantry.

**INVEST.** To take measures for besieging a place.

**INTERVAL.** The distance between platoons, companies, or other divisions of troops. In manœuvring, it is very important to preserve the interval.

**JUDGE ADVOCATE.** A person who conducts the prosecution before courts martial.

**KNAPSACK.** A square satchel, usually covered with canvas or india-rubber, which contains the necessities of an infantry soldier.

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#### LOCAL AND PERSONAL.

**NORWICH.** We are glad to learn that the services of Mr. B. B. Whittemore, at the falls, are so well appreciated that his salary has been increased to \$1,000. Mr. W. is one of our best teachers,—ever ready to aid in whatever tends to the benefit of his profession, and this increase of his compensation at the present time is highly complimentary. The Norwich people know the value of good teachers and also how to retain their services.

**C. F. HOLT.** This gentleman, a graduate of the last class in the Normal School, is engaged in teaching successfully at East Berlin, where his services are well appreciated.

**A WELL MERITED CANING.** We learn that our worthy friend A. Morse, Esq., President of our State Association, was recently way laid by his pupils and made to receive a beautiful gold-headed cane. As nearly as we can learn the first blow fell upon his open hand,—causing it to close around the most attractive part! Well friend Morse, you richly deserved that caning and we are glad you got it.

**BRIDGEPORT.** Having an hour of leisure in this city we called at the schools of Messrs. Strong and Johnson. Mr. Strong has a very pleasant and flourishing school and an excellent feeling evidently exists between teacher and pupils. Mr. Johnson has also a good school and we should judge from a brief call that both teacher and pupils are well performing their parts.

**DARIEN DEPOT.** At this place we visited a school kept by Miss Francis Gorham. So good a teacher and scholars deserve a better house,—and we feel that this pleasant village can hardly afford to have a school house in any way inferior to other villages. The Rev. Mr. Barnes is greatly interested in the schools of Darien, and as Acting Visitor he is doing a good work.

**S. J. WHITON**, one of our Associate Editors, has again sailed for Africa, to be connected with the Mendi Mission, as a teacher. It will be remembered that he went a year ago and was obliged to return on account of ill-health.

We shall miss him from this State for he was always ready to aid in any effort for the good of schools. As a teacher and school visitor he will prove a loss to his native town. Our best wishes attend him in his new field of labor.

**NORMAL SCHOOL.** The summer term of this institution opened very favorably and the number in attendance is nearly 100. It is hoped that our present Legislature will make liberal provision for the support of this school, as we believe it is doing a good work for the schools of the State.

**M. V. B. GLOVER.** We have seen a letter from Sergt. A. E. Bronson of the Conn. 17th, stating that Mr. Glover died of the Camp fever, in Virginia. Mr. Glover was a graduate of the Normal School in the Class of 1861,—and sustained a good reputation as a christian and patriot. Thus are many of our best young men sacrificed by the unholy rebellion.

Mr. Bronson writes hopefully, and expresses confidence of the ultimate success of our army,—and if the brave soldiers in the field can be hopeful and patient should not we who remain at home be so too?

Many of our good teachers are in the service of their country, and are placing us under weighty obligations. Let us not forget them.

**TO CORRESPONDENTS.** We have now nearly used the contents of our "drawer" and shall be glad to receive new articles. So far as possible let them be brief and of a practical bearing.

**REPORT OF THE SCHOOLS OF CONNECTICUT.** Our thanks are due to Hon. D. N. Camp for a copy of this valuable report. We give an extract on another page and shall, in our next, give some statistics concerning the schools.

**ADVERTISEMENTS.** We would call attention to the few pages of advertisements in this number. The Elementary Algebra published by R. S. Davis & Co., is a good work for school use.

The reading works advertised by Ellsworth are among the best works for school use. The Outline Maps, etc., advertised by O. D. Case & Co., are worthy of a place in every school room. The system of penmanship published by Crosby & Nichols is not surpassed by any other we have seen.

CROSBY & NICHOLS, Boston, publish "Hanson's Preparatory Latin Prose Book" which we most cordially commend to teachers and students. It is a very attractive book and contains all the Latin prose necessary in a course of study preparatory to entering College. It has copious notes and a Latin English Vocabulary. The work contains 775 pages and costs about \$1.50 to \$2.00. We presume the publishers will send it to any address, postage paid, for \$2.00. At that price it will prove a cheap book to any Latin Student.

[illegible]

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E. B. JENNINGS, *Principal.*

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J. B. CHASE, *Instructor in Mathematics.*

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